Research on the Problems and Countermeasures of Community Support for Early Childhood Family Education

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Abstract: As the main body of early childhood education, family education has not received sufficient attention for a long time, leading to parents lacking modern educational concepts and facing confusion. As an important support system for family education, community should provide assistance for family education. However, there are currently problems with community support for family education, such as weak awareness of community support for family education, lack of established policies and systems for community support, lack of funding for community support, and a single guidance model for community support.

Keywords: family education; Community support; problem

1. Introduction

With the transformation and development of society, family education is facing many new contradictions and challenges, such as imbalanced and insufficient development, incompatibility with economic and social development, and uneven quality. It is urgent to build a scientific and systematic organization, guidance, and support system. In 2016, the comprehensive two child policy was officially implemented, increasing the burden of family childcare and urgently requiring communities, schools, and kindergartens to jointly shoulder the responsibility of childcare. In November 2016, China issued the "Five Year Plan for Guiding and Promoting Family Education (2016-2020)" (hereinafter referred to as the "Plan"), which proposed the overall goal of further expanding the position of family education guidance services and clearly pointed out the need to strengthen the function of community family education services, focusing on promoting family education guidance services as an important content of urban and rural community service stations, and integrating them into the urban and rural community public service system. In October 2021, the Thirty first Meeting of the Standing Committee of the 13th National People's Congress of the China passed the Law of the China on the Promotion of Family Education (hereinafter referred to as the "Promotion Law"), which states that the state and society provide guidance, support and services for family education. People's governments at all levels guide family education work and establish a sound mechanism for family school social collaborative education. Community, as an environmental system closely related to the growth of young children, is also an important support system for alleviating family education difficulties. Community support for family education refers to the use of certain material, spiritual, and psychological means to help improve the quality of family education and promote the development of young children through formal and informal community support networks. This article analyzes the current problems in community support for early childhood family education, and provides solutions for better leveraging the role of the community in family education[1-3].

2. The Theoretical Foundation of Community Support for Early Childhood Family Education

2.1 Ecological systems theory

Psychologist Brown Fen Brenner believes that children's development should emphasize their environment, and puts forward the Ecological systems theory. In his theoretical model, Branfen Brenner referred to the constantly changing environment in which life lives and interacts with it as a behavioral system. The system is divided into four levels, from small to large: microsystem, medium system, external system, and macro system. The innermost layer of the environmental hierarchy is the microsystem, which refers to the direct environment for individual activities and interactions, which is

constantly changing and developing. For most infants, microsystems are limited to the home. As babies continue to grow, the scope of activities continues to expand into kindergartens, schools, and peer relationships, constantly incorporating them into the microsystem of infants and young children. The second environmental level is the intermediate system, which refers to the connections or interrelationships between various microsystems. The third environmental level is the outer system, which refers to the systems that children do not directly participate in but have an impact on their development. For example, the working environment of parents. The fourth environmental system is the macro system. Refers to the cultural, subcultural, and social environments that exist in the above three systems. The macro system is actually a broad ideology. Therefore, according to Brownfield Brenner's Ecological systems theory model, families, communities, kindergartens and peer relationships that have more contact with children. As a direct environment for communication with children and an important place for children to grow up, it is particularly important for communities to carry out family education activities.

2.2 Social Support Theory

The academic community has not yet reached a unified understanding of the connotation of social support. Overall, researchers generally believe that social support is centered around the object of support, obtaining material and psychological support from the social relationships around it. The research on social support theory can be traced back to the study of suicide rates by French sociologist Dilkheim in the late 19th century. In the 1960s, Bauerbay formally raised social support as an academic issue in psychiatry research. In 1987, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) included informal network support in the rehabilitation plan of mental patients, emphasizing rehabilitation in natural networks rather than treatment institutions, with the ultimate goal of returning to the community naturally. The social support system is a complex multidimensional system that generally includes the subject, object, and mediator of social support. Defined from the perspective of social interaction. Social support is the intimate connection between people. Defined from the nature of social behavior, social support is a force or factor that promotes human development in the social environment. Defined from the role of social resources. Social support is often considered a potential resource for individuals to handle stressful events. In recent years, with the continuous increase in childcare costs and the gradual weakening of mutual assistance in child care brought about by family miniaturization, economic and work pressures have become the main contradictions faced by childcare families. Establishing community and family public libraries has become an urgent need for families. Therefore, we will continuously improve family policies and establish community family comprehensive service centers. Provide good social support for parents who encounter confusion in family education.

3. The problems in community support for early childhood family education

3.1 Weak awareness of community support for family education

Due to our long-term focus on school education and neglect of the development of family education, family education has long been marginalized. Parents believe that school education bears full responsibility for educating their children, without establishing a scientific concept of family education, and neglecting the important impact of family education on their children's development. On the other hand, parents rarely seek help from others when conducting family education, believing that educating their children is their personal matter and not relying on specialized family education guidance institutions. In addition, due to the imbalanced development situation in our country, after the rural population moves towards cities, their understanding of community functions is not comprehensive, and most people are not clear about the responsibilities and work content of the community. Moreover, the development of communities in China is not yet mature. Currently, most communities in China are responsible for administrative work and pay little attention to the development of education.

3.2 The policy system for community support has not yet been established

Both urban and rural communities, including family education, have not yet formed a stable management mechanism in terms of community support organization construction and funding guarantee. In terms of policies and regulations, China has successively issued a series of policy documents on family education, including the "National Guidelines for Family Education", the "Guiding Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Strengthening Family Education Work", and the

"National Guidelines for Family Education (2019)". However, China has not yet introduced relevant laws and regulations on community guided family education, so there is no clear authority and responsibility for carrying out family education services in communities. This makes it difficult for relevant staff and management to operate. Secondly, in terms of operational mechanisms, from an institutional perspective, a sound operational mechanism and governance structure are the foundation for community guided family education. Most communities in China adopt a top-down management model, with the government at the core. Based on the needs of the management system, a management mechanism is formed with community streets as the core and women's federations as the overall plan. In the increasingly open modern society, relying solely on top-down management models can no longer meet the needs of community development[4-5].

3.3 Lack of funding for community support

Firstly, community education resources are old, outdated, and poor, lacking infrastructure and equipment for guidance services, making it impossible to provide suitable community activity venues for parents, and unable to carry out large-scale family education guidance and practical activities, let alone allocate the family education guidance that parents need. For example, common book reading rooms, sports activity rooms, parent-child game rooms, psychological counseling rooms, and so on. Secondly, the professional staff of the community is insufficient and their professional level is limited. Some Community practice lack systematic and professional knowledge about the laws of children's psychological development and the establishment of parent-child relationship, which leads to one-sided and superficial guidance of family education, and it is difficult to truly solve the problems that community residents are confused about in family education. It may be due to financial reasons that it is not possible to attract high-level professionals in professional family education or there is a serious brain drain, resulting in a shortage of professionals. In short, the timing and venue of community activities are not fixed, and the frequency is difficult to guarantee. The existing faculty capacity is also very limited, so the activities carried out lack systematicity, professionalism, and timeliness, which affects the effectiveness of community guidance for family education.

3.4 Single guidance mode for community support

The guidance mode includes the content, object, and form of guidance. From the perspective of guidance content, most of the content of community guided family education currently focuses on promoting the importance of family education for preschool children, or popularizing the development laws of children and the characteristics of different age groups, lacking guidance on family education knowledge and parents' practical abilities. From the perspective of guidance forms, currently, when communities provide guidance for preschool children's family education, most of them only use oral propaganda or lectures, such as distributing guidance manuals and writing notices on bulletin boards. However, with the development of society, this method of publicity and guidance is often overlooked by parents. Some communities also adopt the form of symposiums for guidance, but most of the symposiums are mere formality and lack attractiveness or educational value. From the perspective of guidance objects, there is a lack of guidance for families with special children. For example, personalized services for disabled families, poor families, single parent families, Left-behind children in China, lost families, intergenerational families and other special families are still insufficient. Due to the fact that special family members in the community belong to marginalized individuals and have limited access to resources from all sectors of society, special families look forward to and need community assistance and guidance tailored to their own needs[6-9].

4. Strategies for Community Support for Early Childhood Family Education

4.1 Update concepts to make parents aware of the importance of community support

The multiple environmental model of children's development suggests that communities, as a collection of families, significantly affect the development of young children. Among them, the family environment, such as parent-child interaction, parent-child physical and mental health, and parental parenting concepts, directly affect the development of young children. Community environment, such as community safety, community cohesion, and the quality of early childhood education in the community, can directly affect the development of young children as a remote environment, or indirectly affect their development through family environment. Firstly, it is necessary to promote the

importance of family education throughout society, change the misconception that people only value school education in the past, and guide parents to establish a correct parenting concept. Secondly, in the past, society only valued the education of parents for their children, believing that parents were the "authority" of education and neglecting the education of parents. Therefore, society needs to reverse the misconception of neglecting parental education. Thirdly, the community should actively carry out work to help parents recognize the way and content of Community practice, actively participate in community affairs, and realize the coordinated education of families, schools and society. In short, the entire society should establish correct educational concepts and raise awareness of the importance of community support.

4.2 Improve relevant laws and regulations, and build a guarantee mechanism

In order to build a family education community support system, it is necessary to establish complete laws and regulations, community management system, and related systems. Firstly, the country should promptly introduce the "Family Education Guidance Law" to provide legal basis for family education and community support, clarify the rights and responsibilities of community support, and provide clear funding sources for community use in family education guidance services. Secondly, the state and local governments should quickly introduce a framework for guiding family education as the overall guiding principle of the plan, clarifying the direction for community guidance on family education, and developing a guidance manual for family education to promote scientific and standardized community guidance on family education services. Once again, the state and local authorities should establish the qualifications and professional standards for community family education workers, utilize policies to introduce high-level talents in family education, and establish a professional team for community family education guidance services. Finally, universities should establish family education related majors, cultivate family education professionals, implement the main responsibility of family education mentors, and promote the professional development of family education[10-13].

4.3 Government procurement and improvement of community support management system

Article 7 of the Family Education Promotion Law clearly states that it encourages and supports the provision of family education guidance through government purchase of services. As a new type of public service supply method, the operating mechanism of government purchase services can be summarized as government investment, targeted purchase, contract management, and evaluation and fulfillment. Therefore, in order to build a service-oriented government, it is necessary to transform its functions from being the sole provider of public services to being a collaborator. The government realizes the marketization and socialization of public services through the organization, utilization, and management of social forces. In recent years, China has gradually tried to adopt the government purchase service method in the field of social services, such as government purchase of elderly care services, medical and health services, education services, etc., which has accelerated the transformation of government functions and is conducive to solving certain problems in the field of public services. At the same time, in order to prevent disorderly competition in social organizations, we need to improve institutional norms, establish evaluation mechanisms, and constrain the behavior of social organizations. The governance structure of J Street Family Development Service Center in the central urban area of Beijing is based on government procurement of services, with social organizations responsible for overall operation. This not only solves the problem of funding, but also provides higher quality services for community family education. In response to the lack of effective funding and professional investment in community support for family education guidance services, government procurement can be adopted to purchase family education guidance services from eligible social organizations and prioritize their selection, promoting more efficient implementation of community support for family education guidance services.

5. Conclusions

Professor Li Hongzeng pointed out that the model of family education guidance refers to a relatively stable model in terms of organization, object, content, form, and related elements of guidance that is suitable for a certain guidance unit and target audience, and brings certain effects to parents and children under the guidance of certain family education guidance theories. The community should enrich the content and form of guidance, first draw on the experience of advanced family education guidance units, extract regular experiences to form a prototype, and ultimately form a guidance model

in guiding practice. For example, drawing inspiration from the "Early Childhood Family Education Program (ECFE)" in Minnesota, the core curriculum framework for parental education is clarified, and the design of parental education guidance programs is guided by the core curriculum framework for parental education, and educational activities are carried out based on the needs of parents. Therefore, when providing guidance, the community can understand the needs of parents in advance and adopt targeted guidance for children from different families, groups, and age groups. In terms of guidance forms, communities can try to adopt more diverse forms. For example, salons can help parents relax and effectively solve their practical problems. The form of lectures can systematically provide parents with parenting knowledge. Parent-child activities such as music classes and mother baby classes can enhance parent-child relationships. In short, community support for family education guidance services should continuously enrich the objects, content, and forms of guidance, ensuring that every family can enjoy suitable, scientific, and effective family education guidance services.

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